

# THE ASYLUM

*Quarterly Journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society*

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Volume VII, No. 2

Summer, 1989

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## NBS news & notes

President Champa has revealed that the annual meeting of the NBS will be held at 7 p.m., Friday, 11 August during the ANA Convention in Pittsburg; Q. David Bowers will be the featured speaker. The president also revealed that the *Invasion of Louisville* film (video) will be shown during the proceedings.

At 6 p.m. on Thursday of the ANA Convention, President Champa will moderate a Numismatic Theater program featuring four NBS members: Remy Bourne, John J. Ford, Frank Katen and Frederick Kolbe. Topic of the program is *Why every numismatist should own a reference library*.

Carling Gresham will lecture in the Numismatic Theater at 1 p.m., Saturday, 12 August; his topic will be *Computers in numismatics*.

It's planned to hold a regional meeting of the society at the MOON convention in October; the meeting will be chaired by Remy Bourne. Perhaps the next issue will contain more details on this.

## NBS officers & directors



L. to r., Cal Wilson, dir; John Bergman, secretary/treasurer; Frederick Kolbe, dir; Armand Champa, president; Remy Bourne, vice president; Charles Davis, dir., and Carling Gresham, dir.



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## The Asylum

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Summer, 1989

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## From the editor

One of our esteemed members was kind enough to suggest to the project director for the publication of *The papers of Robert Morris* that she tell us about the numismatic value of those papers. I am happy to present as the lead article in this issue D<sup>r</sup> Elizabeth M. Nuxoll's notice about that publication. Chicken bibliomaniacs will undoubtedly object that books published yesterday are not worthy of a place in their libraries; see in regard to this point of view the quotation from Eugene Field elsewhere in this issue.

*The papers of Robert Morris*, an edition in progress at Queens College of the City University of New York, is restoring the financier of the American Revolution to his rightful place in our history with the definitive edition of his diary, correspondence, and other papers as superintendant of finance, 1781-1784. The beginning of this project was financed by a grant from Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette; they have been joined as supporters by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and Queens College, as well as other corporations, foundations, and private individuals.

D<sup>r</sup> Bagg has announced that a Bowers and Merena sale this fall will contain books relating to foreign numismatics from the Norweb family library. It may be assumed that that section of the library also contained scarce and valuable items.

The Money Tree have announced that they have scheduled a mid-July sale which will feature Remy Bourne's magnificent library of Canadian numismatic literature and will also contain U.S., foreign, and ancient material.

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## To the editor

Bob Johnson writes

Recently I received the latest issue of *The Asylum*, along with the gentle reminder that my subscription had lapsed. I had already planned to let my membership expire, since there wasn't a lot to hold my interest. I joined to find a few sources for useful numismatic books. I did find a few dealers who have served me well and was able to buy a number of good out-of-print books at reasonable prices. There are only a limited number of books dealing with my interests: coins from Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru; numismatic errors. Eighty-year old auction catalogs hardly hold my attention. As Charles Davis wrote in the spring 1989 issue, "Demand for reference material that will be used in the daily pursuit of knowledge is extraordinary."

It seems to me that the Numismatic Bibliomania Society might attract and maintain more members if a greater number of reviews were done on current books or even periodicals. *The Asylum* seems to focus on such a narrow area of numismatic works that unless you collect old, out-of-print (sometimes inaccurate and superseded) books and auction catalogs you are out of the mainstream.

Just for kicks, I'll throw in my dues for one more year. I'll even promise a short synopsis of three current error coin magazines of which many may not be aware. Ω

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### Classified

**NUMISMATIC book list** 50¢. Books on coins, tokens, banking. New, used, scarce. Also need to buy same. R. Stickley, Box 64, Pierrefonds, Quebec, Canada H9H 4K8.

**NUMISMATIC books.** Australia's most comprehensive list (450 items) of Australian, New Zealand and world numismatic books available now from M.E.F. Books, P. O. Box 229, Narrabeen, NSW 2101, Australia.



## Revolutionary finances

by Dr Elizabeth M. Nuxoll

*New findings on the notes and coins of the American revolutionary era*

AS superintendant of finance of the United States from 1781 to 1784 under the articles of confederation, Robert Morris, "the financier of the American revolution", was responsible for keeping the money machine going after the collapse of the Continental currency. His papers, edited by the staff of *The papers of Robert Morris* at Queens College of CUNY, document the creation and use of many of the coins, notes, and certificates of the revolutionary era and provide a wealth of new information for numismatists and scripophilists. Volumes six and seven also include illustrations of the coins and financial instruments referred to in their texts.

Volume seven (November 1, 1782 - May 4, 1783), published in February 1989 by the University of Pittsburg Press, prints the documents relating to Morris' presentation to congress in April 1783 of the Nova Constellatio pattern coins, the earliest of which he describes as "the first that has been struck as an American coin." Along with handsome illustrations of these rare coins appear notes summarizing the most recent research on their production and their design, and their relationship to subsequent American coinage and to the development of national consciousness. The Libertas/Justitia (Liberty and Justice) legend appearing on these rare coins is unique. Although its use in the pledge of allegiance makes the phrase "Liberty and Justice" seem quintessentially American, in fact the justice motif is a rarity. It appeared once before on a Continental currency note produced in 1779, featuring scales and the motto "Fiat Justitia". The legend "Liberty" and the head of the goddess Liberty predominated on later American coins, but the reference to Justice disappeared. A suggestion to incorporate a female figure of Justice with the motto "To all their due" on copper coins was rejected by the

United States Senate in 1792, possibly because the word Justice was so often associated with controversial plans to fund the national debt.

The common notion that cent means one hundredth obscures Morris's solution to the problem of fractional exchange rates. If the Spanish dollar was divided into 1440 units, then an even 16 units was equal to one penny. One real was equal to an even 180 units. The dollar could have been divided with equal integrity by 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, etc. A brief history of Robert Morris' word *cent* appeared in the *New English dictionary* in 1893 which is worth quoting.

#### "CENT"

"4. In various monetary systems the term used for the hundredth part of a standard unit.

" a. In United States of America (also in Canada, British Guiana, and many other British colonies): The hundredth part of a dollar; a copper (or nickel) coin of this value, nearly equal to a half-penny of Great Britain. (Often taken as the type of the smallest current coin; whence such expressions as 'I don't care a cent for'.)

" Apparently the first mention of *cent* occurs in the letter of Robert Morris to the U.S. Congress in 1782, suggesting that the American monetary unit should be the 1/1440 of a dollar, and that a coin equal to 100 of these or 6/72 of a dollar (about 3 3/4d. Eng.) should be made, and called a *cent*. This proposal was not taken up; but it may have suggested the name 'cent' for the coin=1/100 of a dollar, ordained by the Continental Congress on 8 August 1786 (see quot.). There exists, however, an American copper token, commonly called the *Washington cent* bearing on one side a head in a wreath with the legend 'Washington and Independence', and date '1783'; on the other the words 'One Cent', and the exergue 1/100. But it is not certain that 1783 represents the date of issue; this token was probably struck as late as 1789, the date 1783 being merely that of the conclusion of the War of Independence. Previously to the coining of the cent, or 1/100 of a dollar,



and down to 1789, accounts were kept in dollars and ninetieths, a relic of the time when the Spanish piastre or piece of eight reals, called by the colonists 'dollar', was worth 7s.6d., (90 pence) of the money of account of Maryland and Pennsylvania. (From notes communicated by the late Prof. J.W. Andrews of Marietta Coll., Ohio.)

"1782 MORRIS in Sparks *Life & Writ.*, (1832) I.275 One hundred [units] would be the lowest silver coin, and might be called a Cent. 1786 *Ord. Continent. Congress, U.S.* 8 Aug., Mills, Cents, Dimes, Dollars. 1804 MITCHELL in *Naval Chron.* XIII. 160 Seamen pay twenty Cents. 1837 W. IRVING *Capt. Bonneville* II.45 To pause at any paltry consideration of dollars and cents. 1863 FR. KEMBLE *Resid. Georgia* 40, I will give a cent to every little boy or girl. 1872 RAYMOND *Statist. Mines & Mining* 335 Potatoes, 6 cents. per pound; sugar, 20 to 30 cents."

Also of interest in *The papers of Robert Morris* is a report of 12 December 1782 drafted by Gouverneur Morris, the assistant superintendant of finance, discussing the value at which foreign coins should be received at the American treasury. These notes and documents supplement the discussion of Morris' 15 January 1782 plan for a mint, which appeared in volume four, and Gouverneur Morris' proposals of 18 June 1782 for determining the valuation of coins by the nation's first bank which appeared in volume five.

Another major contribution in volume seven is a discussion of the virtually unknown subsistence notes or Hillegas notes. Signed by Michael Hillegas, treasurer of the United States, they were issued in 1783 to army officers to use for purchasing food and other necessities from army contractors or on the open market. No specimen of these notes is known to have survived.

Appearing in the appendix are the early records of the Bank of North America. These document the procedures of the nation's first national and commercial bank, created to implement Morris' "Plan for establishing

a national bank" of 17 May 1781, which was published in the opening volume of this series. One highlight is an illustration of one of the bank's first checks, dated 4 March 1782 and signed by Owen Biddle. An even greater contribution is the most complete discussion available in print of the production, design, and use of the first American bank notes.

Those desiring further data on early American financial instruments should consult volume six (1984), which illustrates and explains the celebrated Morris notes. Personal notes drawn by the superintendant on his cashier, John Swanwick, they were issued to finance the Yorktown campaign and for other publick purposes until the government's credit could be reestablished. These are the notes of which the financier boasted, "You may very truly tell your Antagonists that from one End of this Continent to the other I can obtain Whatever is wanted for the public Service, by a Scrip of the Pen."

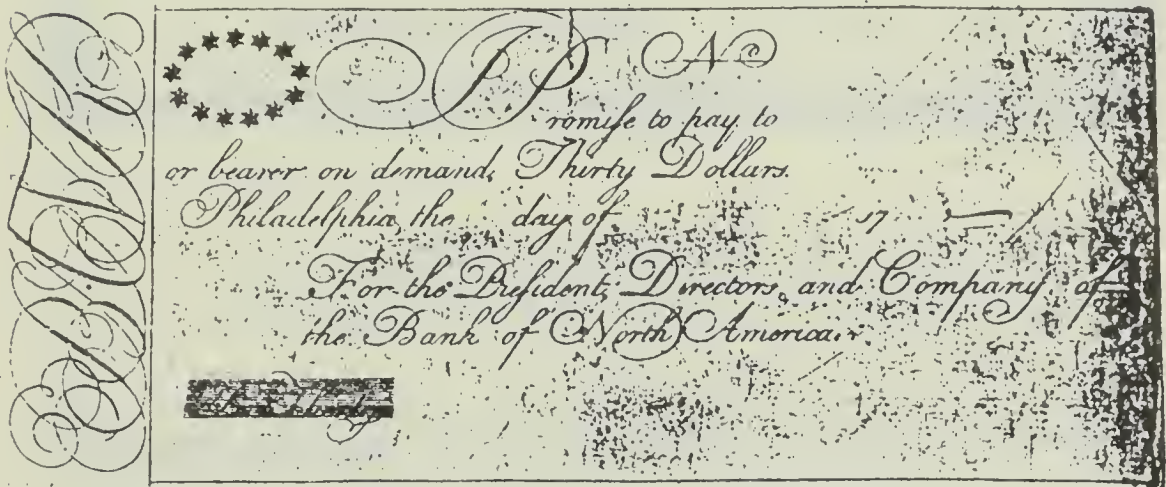
Also illustrated and analyzed are Continental currency, loan office certificates (Revolutionary War bonds), quartermaster certificates issued by the army for supplies, final settlement certificates issued to pay the public debt, and the bills of exchange drawn against foreign loans. First issued for interest on loan-office certificates, such bills were also sold in Philadelphia by Haym Salomon, official broker to the office of finance, and in Boston by James Lovell, receiver of Continental taxes in Massachusetts. These bills of exchange drawn on public account should be distinguished from those Morris drew on his private account as a merchant. See *Money and exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: A handbook*, by John J. McCusker, Chapel Hill, N.C., 1978, esp. 18-23.

Researchers, genealogists, and collectors of documents of the American Revolution will also find invaluable the biographical sketches identifying the innumerable public officials, merchants, manufacturers, and financiers who appear in the volumes.

Volumes of *The papers of Robert Morris* are available at \$55 per volume

from The University of Pittsburg Press, 127 North Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburg, PA 15260, (412) 624-4110.

Any readers knowing of the existence in private collections of documents or financial instruments pertaining to Morris' administration as superintendent of finance are requested to send the information to D<sup>r</sup> Elizabeth M. Nuxoll, The Papers of Robert Morris, Queens College of CUNY, 65-30 Kissena Blvd, Flushing NY 11367. Ω



National Bank note  
courtesy of Eric P. Newman



cf N: 1  
(1<sup>st</sup> ~~TH. P. A. T. P.~~)  
To. sight pay to the Bearer **TWENTY**  
Dollars, for which this shall be your  
sufficient warrant. *Wm Morris*  
To Mr John Swanwick  
Philadelphia

Morris's note: \$20 sight draft, slightly reduced,  
from Princeton University Library special collection.

BON POUR, L<sup>e</sup>. 4000, n<sup>o</sup> 331 Pour Compte des Etats Unis de L'Amerique  
Philadelphia, Ce 7 Sept<sup>r</sup> 1782  
M<sup>on</sup> sieur *Africaine* Jours de vue il vous plait payer par cette Lettre de Change,  
la premiere, seconde, troisieme, quatrieme, cinquieme, septieme et huitieme ne l'estant,  
a M<sup>on</sup> sieur *Jacques Lovell* ou a son Ordre  
la Somme de *Quatre Mille Livres Tournois*  
Valeur reçue comptant que paierez suivant l'avis de  
A M<sup>on</sup> sieur *Grand*  
M<sup>on</sup> sieur *Banquier* Ce Paris  
Votre très humble serviteur  
*Wm Morris*  
*J. J. Furmen*

Bill of Exchange  
courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania

# Book prices current

## Part One, by Dr R.A. Bagg

LAST November 15, the second day of Bowers and Merena's auction of Part III of the Norweb Collection, several price records were broken for American numismatic books. The highest price realized for one of the twenty five lots of literature in the sale was a record \$1870 for which a copy of Harold P. Newlin's 1883 *Classification of the early half dimes of the United States* was hammered down. One of the forty copies with the plates (out of an edition of one hundred), this copy has added a typescript description of the plates, the PRL from the Newlin sale, and has a note about an additional 1795 variety discovered by Steigerwalt in 1900 bound in.

A.W. Browning's *Early quarter dollars of the United States 1796-1838* brought a record \$1650. Only about fifty copies of this work were printed in 1925; John J. Ford, Jr., offered reprints for sale in 1951. These reprints are distinguished by the use of sans serif gilt lettering on the cover rather than roman and by the fact that the text pages are narrower than the plates.

Thomas Hall's *Descriptive list of the coppers issued by authority, for the State of Connecticut, for the year 1787*, although graded at very fine, brought only \$1155. A very good copy had realized \$1300 in the Bowers and Merena sale of the Taylor Collection in March of 1987.

Interesting prices from this sale were

Breen, Walter. Photostat of Breen's MS on U.S. half cents.	\$385
Browning, A.W. <i>Early quarter dollars</i> . 1925.	1650
Chapman, Henry. <i>Stickney sale</i> , plated.	880
Chapman, S.H. <i>Lambert sale</i> , plated. 1910.	935
Crosby, Sylvester S. <i>Early coins of America</i> . 1875.	743
Elder, Thomas L. <i>Wilson sale</i> , plated.	495
Frossard, Ed. <i>Monograph of U.S. cents and half cents</i> . 1879.	248

Hall, Thomas. <i>Connecticut coppers</i> . 1892	1155
Mehl, B. Max. <i>Collection of W.F. Dunham</i> . 1941.	935
Miller, H.C. & H. Ryder. <i>State coinages of New England</i> . 1920.	357
a second copy	413
Newlin, Harold P. <i>Early half dimes</i> . 1883.	1870
Steigerwalt, C. <i>Illustrd hist. of U.S. and colonial coins</i> . 1884.	522
Valentine, D.W. <i>Fractional currency</i> . 1924.	165

For an encore Bowers and Merena sold on the following evening the Byron Johnson copies of *The Numismatist*, for \$17,600. The set was sold in three lots:

Volumes 1 and 2.	\$9900
Volumes 3 through 6.	5500
Volumes 7 through 72.	2200

Due to technical difficulties the illustration of the first page of the first issue of the *Numismatist* comes from the ANA library, courtesy of Librarian Lynn Chen.

*Catalogs and PRL of these sales may be obtained from Bowers and Merena, at \$25 and \$20 respectively for Garrett III and the Silberman Collection.*

## Part 2, by O.C.

A joint Kolbe-Spink sale last December realized several impressive prices. Although copies of the Browning and Newlin books which reached record prices in the Norweb sale made only \$1540 each in this sale, a copy of Hall's Connecticut Coppers brought \$1430. Here are a few other, random prices:

<i>American Journal of Numismatics</i> , first 53 volumes	\$5940
Bushnell sale (S.H. & H. Chapman)	1980
Hunter sale (S.H. Chapman)	1760
Miller sale (Thomas L. Elder)	2860
<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i> , run from 1845-1905, bound	3400
<i>Revue numismatique</i> , first 77 volumes (1836-1924)	8800
Stack's auction catalogs, 1935-1988, near complete	3410
Yeoman. <i>The red book</i> , first 34 editions.	1045

This sale contained 758 lots, most of them important numismatic books or magazines, domestic and foreign.

Money Tree's 13 March 5th mail bid sale offered an odd volume of *The Numismatist*, Vol. 3, No. 2 through Vol. 6, No. 12, in need of rebinding, which realized \$5280. The section of the sale devoted to classical numismatics brought strong prices for such standard items as Head's



*Historia Numorum* (\$176). Duplicates from John Adams' 19th century auction catalogs had "fine, mighty fine, and positively amazing" results. There were thirty-six lots of Attinelli catalogs and four hundred of post-Attinelli. Foreign periodicals made up sixty two lots; demand for them was mixed. Here are some other, random prices from this sale:

Frossard. <i>Isaac F. Wood.</i>	200
Mason. #1: <i>J. Colvin Randall.</i> [1868]	108
Mason. #4: <i>Capt. Edward P. Thorn.</i> (1869)	17
Forrer. <i>Biographical dictionary of medallists</i> , Baldwin reprint.	\$385
<i>British numismatic journal</i> , Vol. 1- Vol. 10 (1904-1913).	358
Henze. <i>Illustrierter Anzeigen</i> , 1865-79.	644
<i>Numismatic chronicle</i> , third series. (1881-1900)	1716
Canessa. <i>Caruso collection.</i>	227
Morrison and Grunthal. <i>Carolingian coinage.</i> ANS NNM 158	55

Function Associates held their first mail bid sale on 17 May 1989. The first section of their classified catalog contains 39 items from numismatic literature dealers, including several of our directors. Another section contains 114 lots of Q. David Bowers, beginning with his first fixed price list (1955) and concluding with *Rare coin review* No. 46, with the balance of the 602 lot sale general world numismatics.

Random prices realized from the sale follow:

<i>The Asylum</i> , Vol. 1, No. 1.	\$15
<i>The Asylum</i> , Vol. 1, No. 1 - Vol. 2, No. 2.	35
Kolbe. <i>Catalogue One</i> - 1970.	8
Collins. <i>Auction catalogue I.</i> (1 Oct. 1983)	10
The Katens. <i>53rd sale.</i> (24-26 April 1981)	6
Wilson. <i>Mail bid sale No. 1.</i> (8 Dec. 1981)	6
<i>The red book</i> , first edition, first printing (one page defective)	200
<i>The red book</i> , 2, 4-36	1355

Ω

ERRATA

Due to an oversight the five year index to *The Asylum* which supplemented our last issue was not credited to its compiler, Bill Malkmus. Page 16 of Vol. VII, No. 1 illustrates the last page of the first part and page 17 the first page of the last part of Mr Jordan's book.

# The American NUMISMATIST

Vol. 1.

September-October 1893

No. 1.

## ON COLLECTING.

This is the age of collections and the spirit of gathering together and classifying is abroad. It shows itself in the gigantic museums, the vast art and antiquarian collections and the great libraries that grace the capitals and literary centers of the world, that have become the meccas of so many pilgrims today.

This spirit has gathered force as it crossed the waters, and in our young republic great progress has been made. The old world and the ages of the past are yielding their tribute to us and the time will come when the country that has given, by far the greatest exposition, will have the grandest museums and collections of art.

The day is coming when the old world will study from American masters; when pilgrimages will be to the Occident rather than the Orient.

We have lately established in Washington, one of the largest museums on the globe. A museum, though yet in its infancy, in some departments has no equal. States vie with states in the greatness of their collections in the different fields of science and art.

Cities and public institutions feel the influence and local societies and collections are established. The enthusiasm of our youth catches the prevail-

ing spirit and the different tastes are shown in the variety of their collections.

A sign of the time most favorable, is the spirit of our youth in these matters; weak and feeble as the efforts may be, fruit will be borne in the future.

It is a hopeful sign when the youth of any land turn their attention to the making of collections; whether it be of coins, minerals, indian relics, paper money, birds eggs, autographs, postage stamps, fossils or curios, it matters not, from any of these lines much may be learned, and the taste cultivated will invariably lead to something higher and better. The germ is there, fruit will be borne some day.

H

For variety, complexity, and innumerable of their coinage, commend us to those small principalities and powers that were of Germany. Fifteen years ago, with a few dozen specimens we vainly thought our set was complete now, with upwards of a thousand varieties, we find we have just begun.

There is nothing you can collect that will represent so much, if properly selected, or will cost so little, if properly bought, as a variety of fifty, one or two hundred coins.

## The largest private library

by Alfred Szego

**P**RECIOUS little has ever been written about the extent and composition of private numismatic libraries. As foreign coin dealers we surveyed our clients a few years ago regarding data on their holdings. About eighty responses were received. Most were quite forthcoming; a few even supplied detailed data. I should clarify at this point by stating that we asked only about the number of numismatic books possessed. Our business is restricted to foreign coins and our respondents probably excluded U.S. references except for just a few basic works.

Prominent libraries up for auction presented the opportunity to delve into the types of books included. The linkage between personal needs and interests and the composition of various holdings was obvious. It soon became evident that comparison between libraries was indeed comparison between chickens and horses. It seems that a library is an intellectual extension of its owner.

The only thing comparable was the numerical count of each library. Based only on this criterion, the following data emerged. Bear in mind that these are approximate numbers which will in some cases be exceeded.

1. Collectors	up to 150 books
2. American coin dealers	up to 1500 books
3. European coin dealers	up to 3500 books
4. Numismatic writers	up to 1500 books

Any attempt at a rational survey is confounded by some seemingly insoluble problems. Were auction catalogs, pamphlets, periodicals, price lists, or mint reports to be counted? What are the limits of private libraries? Probably money, space, or domestic tranquility. Just picture the



boundless joy of the spouse at the prospect of a thousand-volume library sharing a three room apartment!

Despite all these problems the rewards are considerable. The advantage of being able to use your books at all hours, at your convenience, is apparent. Writers commonly work with several books open at the same time and spread over every nearby table, desk, and chair. Just try that in a public library.

The largest reported private library is that of Stacks of New York, with a count of about ten thousand volumes. The huge European auction houses, of which there are several, must possess enormous libraries; the size of their reference libraries can only be guessed. The only way we could determine their size would be to examine auction catalogs liquidating libraries of dealers who have passed on.

There are always surprises: A reclusive grand collector sometimes places an excellent library on the auction block.

As time goes on it is becoming increasingly difficult to acquire more and more important classic works. Prices consequently soar. Will large personal libraries gradually leave the scene?     Ω



**The Money Tree** *would like to say, Thank You!*  
*to all the consignors and bidders in our 5th Mail Bid Sale of Numismatic Literature.*

**Myron Xenos**

**Ken Lowe**

## Confusion rains supreme

by Numisman

**L**AUGHS from published numismatic material are usually unintended. Yet the extensive misuse of the written word should not go unappreciated. The following are exact quotes from the first page of a 1989 business brochure published by a numismatic dealer and are followed by questions which might arise in a reader's mind:

"All items subject to change without notice." *Does this entitle the dealer or the customer to switch the coins?*

"Office Hours 10 AM - 5 PM Monday - Friday, Open Some Saturday." *Can you guess whether that one Saturday will be this year or next year?*

"If you want toning let me know. I send toned coins only on receipt." *Isn't this an unusual service, for a dealer to tone coins you send in?*

"We accept VISA and Master Card. Send or call in all raised information and your phone number." *Would you want to report how much you raised your prices over your cost?*

"Prices listed for most high grade coins are indications only." *Does this indicate an effort to avoid price fixing?*

"Credit cards not excepted on (\*\*) items." *Does a non-exception make a credit card acceptable or not?*

"We neither sell or buy sight unseen, so we will probably be able to pay more for correctly graded material."

Isn't this an eye opener?

Ω

Editor's note: The brochure which Numisman received came from the firm discussed on page 14 of the 29 March *Coin World*.

## The Printer's Devil

by Joel Orosz

ONE of the thrills of my life came when I serendipitously discovered a letter written by the Baltimore collector Robert Gilmore, Jr. which named Eckfeldt as the man who had coined fancy pieces for Gilmore for many years. Eckfeldt had been suspected for a long time, but this letter provided the smoking gun.

That is the sort of discovery one hopes to find in archives. But the books on your shelves also contain forgotten facts. Booker T. Washington used to relate a parable of self-help in his public addresses. The story involves a sailing ship becalmed in sight of land and out of water. Its captain signalled a passing steamship, "Please send water." From the steamship came back the message, "Drop your buckets where you are." The becalmed ship was riding in the fresh water which the Amazon pours into the Atlantic Ocean.

I was reminded of this story a few months ago when I read P. Scott Rubin's intriguing tale of his discovery of the first ANA convention sale, Ben Green's offerings at the 1907 Columbus convention. Scott made his discovery by good old-fashioned detective work. He compared convention dates with sale dates in Gengerke and *voila*, Green's thirty-second matched. Scott then confirmed his discovery by finding a statement in the Green catalog that the sale was to be a feature of the convention.

Drop your bucket where you are! In most fields you need to make a pilgrimage to archival repositories in order to be a scholar. It is still possible to discover significant truths in numismatic bibliography just by reading books and journals in your personal library. As soon as I read Scott's article I looked at my October 1907 issue of *The Numismatist* and found further confirmation. On page 288 is the



statement: "Dr. Ben G. Green held his 32nd auction sale in the Convention rooms." This information had been forgotten by later collectors but had been open to discovery for eighty years. In fact, that issue of *The Numismatist* had been sitting on my shelves for five years, and the discovery was just waiting for me to make it. Ah well, that is a big one that got away.

There are, however, plenty more fish in the sea. Old catalogs and periodicals contain, amidst the verbiage, nuggets little noted nor long remembered. A brief article in the November 1934 issue of *The Numismatist* by Harold Gillingham enabled me to publish new dates for the earliest known coin-collection sales in our country by private treaty (ca 1772) and by auction (1785) in my recent book about Pierre Eugene Du Simitiere, one of our first numismatists.

Indeed, drop your bucket where you are.

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*The following excerpt from Eugene Field's Love affairs of a bibliomaniac, New York: Scribners, 1896, is not grammatically above reproach but will, I think, be found to be an exact quotation.*

--Editor

"Dr. O'Rell has an interesting theory which you will find recorded in the published proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (vol. xxxiv., p. 216). Or, if you cannot procure copies of that work, it may serve your purpose to know that the doctor's theory is to this effect--viz., that bibliomania does not deserve the name of bibliomania until it is exhibited in the second stage. For secondary bibliomania there is no known cure; the few cases reported as having been cured were doubtless not bibliomania at all, or, at least, were what we of the faculty call false or chicken bibliomania.

'In false bibliomania, which,' says Dr. O'Rell, 'is the primary stage of the

grand passion-- the vestibule to the main edifice-- the usual symptoms are flushed cheeks, sparkling eyes, a bounding pulse, and quick respiration. This period of exaltation is not infrequently followed by a condition of collapse in which we find the victim pale, pulseless, and dejected. He is pursued and tormented of imaginary horrors, he reproaches himself for imaginary crimes, and he implores piteously for relief from fancied dangers. The sufferer now stands in a slippery place; unless his case is treated intelligently he will issue from that period of gloom cured of the sweetest of madnesses, and doomed to a life of singular uselessness.

'But properly treated,' continues Dr. O'Rell, 'and particularly if his spiritual needs be ministered to, he can be brought safely through this period of collapse into a condition of reenforced exaltation, which is the true, or secondary stage of, bibliomania, and for which there is no cure known to humanity.'

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"Bibliomania is a phenomenon of all highly civilized countries. The Greeks and the Romans had passionate collectors, who gathered books, not to read them, but to own them. Lucian addresses one of his satires 'to an ignoramus who formed a library' and reproaches him for purchasing books of which he knows not the use. In the second century B.C. when the author of the *Dialogues of the Dead* wrote, bibliomania had reached a high degree of development. Richard de Bury is the most famous of mediaeval book-lovers. The invention of printing, however, accentuated this interest, and enormously increased this species of *vermis bibliothecalis*. The bibliomaniac is portrayed in Sebastian Brandt's *Narrenschiff* (1477). In this work is an engraving of an old man wearing an enormous horn spectacles, sitting in the midst of a library, before a desk loaded with books. In one hand he holds a huge goose-quill; with the other he is turning the double-column pages of a gigantic folio. Beneath is the legend: 'I own heaps of books which I rarely open. If I

read them, I forget them and am no wiser.' By the seventeenth century bibliomaniacs were so plentiful that they were the butt of poets' and satirists' epigrams."

James Westfall Thompson, *The Frankfort bookfair*.

Carl Robertson sent in a quotation from *The bookman's manual*, in which Bessie Graham quoted Eugene Field's remarks about Richard de Bury's *Philobiblion*.

"This is the oldest [ca 1300] book about books. Eugene Field said, 'Richard de Bury was the king, if not the father, of bibliomaniacs; his immortal work reveals to us that long before the invention of printing men were tormented and enraptured by those very same desires, envies, jealousies, greeds, enthusiasm and passion which possess and control bibliomaniacs at the present time.' The *Philobiblion* was written in Latin, and the first English translation was imprinted 'London, 1834.'"

Bessie Graham's *The bookman's manual* was first published by the R.R. Bowker Co., New York, in 1921 and was part of their Bookman's Library. Other volumes in the series were

John A. Holden. *The bookman's glossary*.

Morris H. Briggs. *Buying and selling rare books*.

Charles Knight. *Shadows of old booksellers*.

Will Ransom. *Private presses and the books they have given us*.

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#### Coin cache unveiled

American Numismatic Association president Stephen Taylor (left) and Professional Numismatist Guild executive director Paul Kappanow display the AAG Certification Service coin box, which made its debut Jan. 31. Details on the story begin on Page 10.



#### Lehman leading House subcommittee

By David H. Burstein  
The House subcommittee on the money and finance committee, which was created last year, has a new leader. The subcommittee, which was created last year, has a new leader. The subcommittee, which was created last year, has a new leader.



#### Love tokens provide hobby link to St. Valentine's Day

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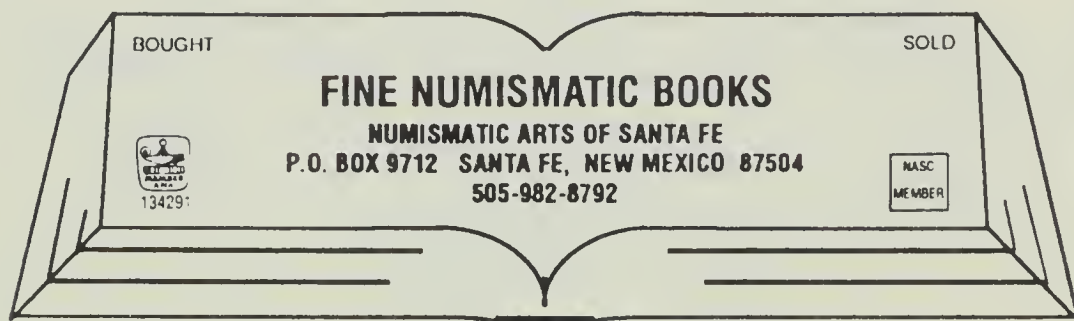
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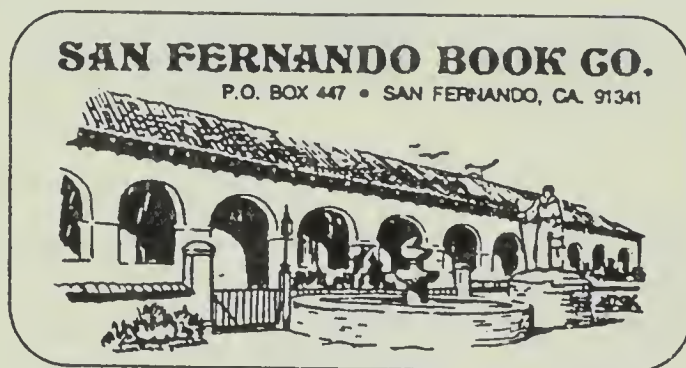
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